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***GOVERNOR CALLS FOR COOPERATION TO AID RETURNING VETERANS***  
***Hosts Roundtable for Faith-Based, Community Organizations***

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano issued a call to action today for Arizona organizations to cooperate in support of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan at a roundtable designed to facilitate networking between military organizations and faith-based and community groups. Dubbed Arizona Operation Family Support, today's meeting was the first of its kind in the country, bringing together federal, state and local groups to discuss ways to work together and help returning veterans and their families.

"We're doing this because there is a higher obligation to take care of these young men and women and their families after they've sacrificed so much for us," Governor Napolitano said. "We want to put our appreciation into action and make sure returning veterans and their families receive all the care and resources they deserve."

The Governor encouraged groups across the state to coordinate together and develop local community networks to prevent any veteran or veteran's family from falling through the cracks. Today's roundtable provided a forum for military leaders, faith-based organizations, and community groups to share strategies to reach out to veterans and their families, and to begin forming those local networks. There are resources available to returning veterans and their families available through numerous groups across Arizona. A list of these resources is available on the Governor's Web site at [www.azgovernor.gov](http://www.azgovernor.gov).

Today's roundtable is the most recent action Arizona has taken to help returning veterans and their families. Arizona established the Military Family Relief Fund to provide financial assistance to family members of military personnel killed or wounded in the line of duty, and who were deployed from a military base in Arizona or were members of the Arizona Army or Air National Guard. The state now offers tuition waivers for the children and spouses of military members who are residents of Arizona or stationed in Arizona and are killed in the line of duty. By the end of the year, there will be a veterans' benefits counselor – an expert trained to help veterans access the benefits to which they are entitled – within an hour's drive of virtually every Arizona veteran. The state income tax exemption for the military income of service members on active duty is now permanent, and the Governor signed legislation this year to protect members of the military from losing professional licenses while on active duty.

For more information on the Office of the Governor, please visit [www.azgovernor.gov](http://www.azgovernor.gov).